



TOWN of
THOMPSON

BOARD OF FINANCE

Minutes: Regular Meeting
Thursday, September 28, 2017
Thompson Public School/Ryscavage Auditorium
7:30 PM

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Chairman Aaron McGarry called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM.

I. Roll call

- A. Members Present: Jim Bellavance, Ray Faucher, Jr., Larry Groh, Jr., Aaron McGarry, Rhonda Rooney, and Susanne Witkowski.
- B. Members Absent: None
- C. Staff Present:
Tina Fox, Recording Secretary
Orla McKiernan-Raftery, Finance Director
- D. Also Present: Members of the Public

II. Correspondence: None

III. Citizen's Comments

- A. Shawn Brissette, Fairway Dr., stated that at some point, the budget needs to move forward. He spoke to Mae Flexer who was quick to say that there was no possibility of a State budget this week. The legislature doesn't seem scared by the executive orders, and whatever the governor takes away is going to be reinstated. He stated that he is not sure how this is different than every other year when the Town is just guessing about proposals. He doesn't want to wait for Christmas to pass a Town budget.
- B. Rene Morin, 130 Pompeo, speaking as both a taxpayer and the Tax Collector, stated that he is concerned about how long this process is taking. Last year the Town approved a 1.63 mill increase, which was about a 5.1% increase. He believes taxpayers would approve a similar increase this year. A 5% increase is about \$500-600,000 away from where the proposed budget stands now. He knows there are concerns about using surplus finds, but he would be more concerned if there was a large increase to the fund balance and the Town eliminated staff, programs, etc. Most taxpayers in the Tax Office over the past few months want to pay their taxes, and do not want to wait until right before Christmas to pay. In order for the tax bills to go out by November 1st, a budget would need to be decided on tonight or next Thursday. There may not be a State budget for months, but Thompson needs the cash now. He reiterated that a 1.3 mill increase would be accepted overwhelmingly at the next referendum.
- C. Bill Witkowski, Clarence Dr., stated that he agrees with S. Brissette and R. Morin. He urged the Board to look at where they are going to cut. The school is in a difficult position and has some real needs. Before the school budget is cut, he suggested the Board ask any questions it needs to. He added that the school is in bad shape right now.

IV. Action on 30 Day Spending Authorization for the Town and School per Connecticut General Statute section 7-405

- A. O. McKiernan-Rafferty stated that she received clarification earlier that day from the Town Attorney. The Town Attorney's interpretation is that a resolution is not needed as a motion will be sufficient. The prior year's actual year-to-date amounts are okay to use. It can also be based on departmental budgets rather than individual line items, so the Town would have the ability to take an overage from another line within the same department. There are currently no line items overspent, and a dollar amount is not needed in the actual motion for approval.
- B. L. Groh, Jr. stated that he does not think the Town should be going over on line items. O. McKiernan-Rafferty stated that is not likely going to happen as the Town and school both are watching their spending and have low cash flow.
- C. There was some discussion about what the Town and school spent through October of last year. N. Breen stated that through October 2016, the school spent \$4.9 million, with \$1.3 million of that in October alone.
- D. There was discussion regarding the wording of the motion.
- E. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Ray Faucher, Jr. seconded the motion that pursuant to Connecticut General Statute section 7-405, the spending authorization through the month of October in the current fiscal year shall not exceed actual expenditures for the same period the previous fiscal year.**

Jim Bellavance- Yes

Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

V. Budget Workshop

- A. R. Faucher, Jr. suggested taking an additional \$400,000 out of surplus, which would bring the surplus to approximately 8.2%. **There was a consensus amongst the Board to take an additional \$400,000 out of surplus.**
- B. J. Bellavance suggested removing the \$75,000 from Library capital projects for the roof and repairs, as suggested by the Library Director and Library Board members. **There was a consensus amongst the Board to remove \$75,000 from the Library capital projects for roof and repairs.**
- C. R. Faucher, Jr. suggested removing the additional funding requested from the Library for Sunday hours, as suggested by Library Board members at the previous meeting. O. McKiernan-Rafferty stated that the total requested for Sunday hours was \$2,100. **There was a consensus amongst the Board to remove \$2,100 from the Library budget.**
- D. There was discussion regarding the \$123,000 added to the budget for catch-up for MERS. **There was a consensus amongst the Board to reduce the pension prior catch-up for MERS line by half to \$61,500.** It was also suggested that if there is an amount left in the pension line at the end of the fiscal year, the Board should visit the idea of putting the difference into a transfer account when transfers are done in June.
- E. There was discussion about the Director of Public Works salary. No change was made to the line item at this time.
- F. K. Beausoleil discussed unforeseen equipment repairs that the Town will now be facing. He suggested removing the \$39,000 for a dump truck and \$30,000 for a backhoe and moving those funds to a capital transfer account for rolling stock so that those funds could be used for whatever the priority is at the time. **There was a consensus amongst the Board to move the \$39,000 for a dump truck and \$30,000 for a backhoe to a capital transfer account for rolling stock, resulting in no change to the overall proposed mill rate.**

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- G. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Rhonda Rooney seconded the motion to send the total proposed budget of \$25,875,744 (mill rate of 27.32) to Town Meeting.**

Jim Bellavance- Yes

Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

VI. Adjourn

- A. **Susanne Witkowski moved and Larry Groh, Jr. seconded the motion to adjourn.**

Jim Bellavance- Yes

Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. Chairman Aaron McGarry adjourned the meeting at 8:58 PM.

Tina Fox
Recording Secretary